

FREE REFLECTION WORKBOOK

# I WAS LAID OFF & I'M NOT OKAY



## BOOK 1: LET'S CHECK IN

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I've been laid off (retrenched) twice and I don't expect it to be the last. The first time I was doing well at work. I found out during a remote company meeting. On that exact day, I was moving into a new and more expensive apartment.

**The second time I got laid off was the day after moving to another country for that said job.** A couple of months prior I was exceeding expectations according to my performance review. My husband also got laid off a month after starting a new job. In some ways the shock of layoffs got "easier" but at the same time it was still a crushing experience and I'm still processing some of these emotions.

I know what it's like to question myself, my skills, my worth and to feel overwhelmed by circumstances. My guess is if you're reading this guide losing your job has had an impact on you in some way. There are so many voices out there: the job market is bad, no one is hiring, quiet quitting, lazy girl jobs, starting your own business, switching careers, courses etc etc. With all these options about what you should and could be doing in addition to the whirlwind of emotions that you might be going through, it can be hard to listen to what you really want and need. It may not feel like it now but you have a choice on what to do next.

This series of guides is my passion project. My hope is that it helps you in a time of need. I'll also share some mistakes I made along the way and offer spaces for reflection that can hopefully help you figure out what's right for you. Feel free to take what you need and leave the rest.

*Jay xoxo*



MY STORY  
WELCOME

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Taking care of your soul

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# FIRST THINGS FIRST

Know that **getting laid off is not your fault** and has nothing to do with your skillset, your worth as a person or how much effort you put into your job. I've seen countless posts on social media where people have been laid off unexpectedly regardless of their performance. People have been caught off guard because, like me, they were high performers with no indication that layoffs were coming. If you do a quick Google search you will find a staggering number of companies that are laying off hundreds of thousands of employees while CEO pay continues to rise.

You got laid off because someone somewhere up the chain didn't budget properly or wasn't strategic enough with a scaling decision or <insert here whatever 1000 reasons companies give>. There is **nothing** that you *should* have done differently, it would have happened anyway.

Getting laid off can be traumatic, especially when you love where you work and if you depend on your salary to survive. Your automatic response might be:

- **Fight:** Attempt to win your job back, challenge the decision or become overwhelming angry in a way that affects you physically
- **Flight:** Immediately jumping into the job search or wanting to escape the current situation
- **Freeze:** Indecision about what to do next. A feeling of helplessness and the inability to take any action:
- **Fawn:** Trying your best to still please the company that laid you off. This can look like continuing to offer to finish off your work or singing the company's praises publicly by mentioning how great it was to work there

These are just some examples of how this may play out. This guide will support you in noticing what might be going on for you.

**You might be tempted to jump into the job search immediately but give yourself at least a day to feel what you feel, whatever that may be.**

## WORRY DUMP EXERCISE:

Take a moment to write down all your thoughts and worries that are sitting in your head. Try not to judge your process. It's totally okay if it's chaotic. If typing is more your thing then go for that too. For example, some of mine looked like: I wasn't good enough at my job for them to keep me, I don't know if I will find another job as good as this one, What will I do for money?

Write yours here:

[illegible]

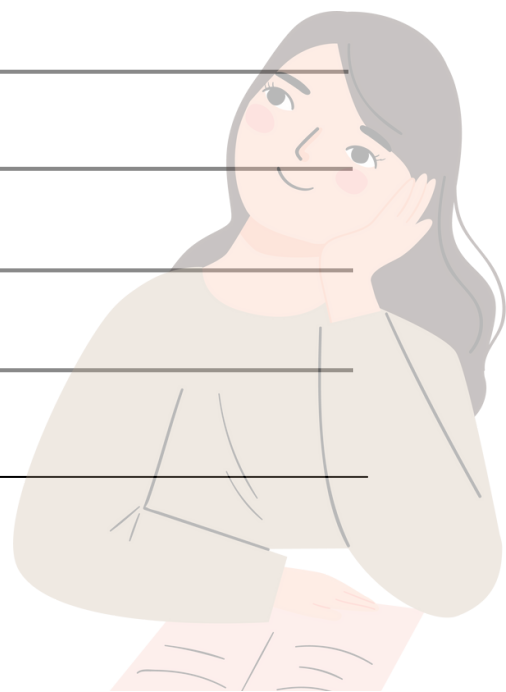


# REFLECTION EXERCISE

Look at what you wrote on the previous page and reflect on the following questions:

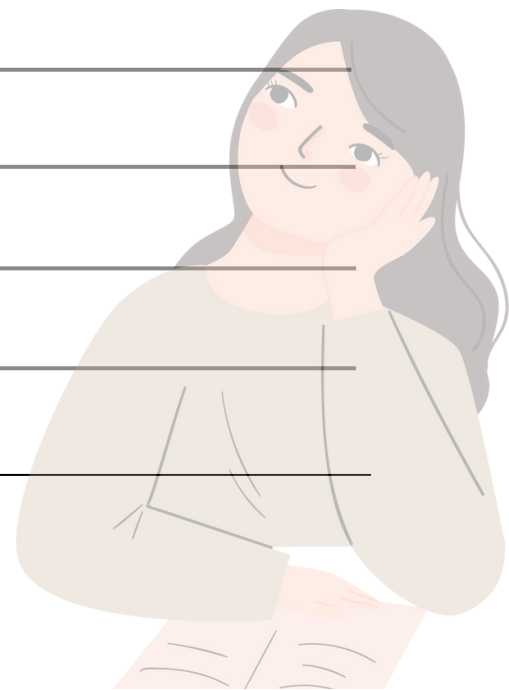
- How true are some of these thoughts? What evidence do you have?
- What stories might you be telling yourself?
- Which beliefs might have an impact on you moving forward?
- What's within your control?

*A bit later on we'll look at options for supporting some of these worries*

[illegible]

## REFLECTION EXERCISE

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. In the bottom right corner, there is a faint, stylized illustration of a person with dark hair, wearing a light-colored top, and smiling. The illustration is partially cut off by the edge of the page.







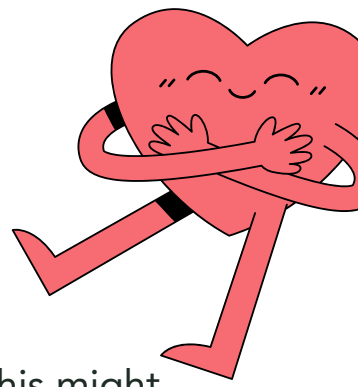
# YOU ARE A WHOLE PERSON AND NOT A JOB

I want to talk about what it looks like to take care of **YOU** in the context of heart, mind, body, and soul. I offer practical suggestions for each and a space for you to reflect on what works for you. If you are overwhelmed, stressed and anxious you may start to rush and feel like you need to apply for every opportunity you see. This can lead to making mistakes on your resume (I've done this) or showing up to interviews underprepared and frazzled. I once sent a cover letter with the wrong company's name, talk about awkward 😬.

It's not just the loss of your job that you will have to process. If you've worked with awesome people, there is also a loss of those relationships. Know that some of your colleagues that you thought you were close to may not reach out at all. And that will also be a mourning and a loss.

Acknowledge all your feelings and allow yourself to feel but don't stay in this place for too long. As my good friend Jo Perold always says "When you feel stuck, move".




# HEART



How can you take care of your heart during this time? While this might seem touchy-feely, let's go there!

Taking care of your heart means acknowledging your feelings, finding joy (not the fake kind) and seeking support. Some people connect with themselves through mindfulness & meditation. For me, it looks like going to therapy & coaching because meditation is hard when I'm in high anxiety.






Taking care of your heart can also look like:

-  Socialising and connecting with those important to you
-  Watching a movie at home with a friend or partner  
(I love watching *Schitt's Creek* on repeat for eternity).
-  Listening to music that makes you feel good, or even music that matches your mood. Head-bang it out 🙌 or be sad through music if that's what you need 😞



It can be tempting to start worrying about finances and dedicating every waking second on the job search but you need to make space to be human.

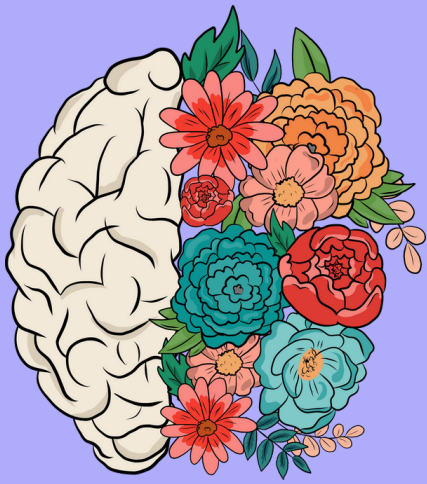
If you're worried about your finances consider connecting with others with things you can do for free (if possible based on where you live):

-  A phone call
-  A walk in a park or forest
-  A hike
-  The beach
-  Plan a boardgame date with your spouse or a friend

[illegible]

## A stylized illustration of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a teal turtleneck sweater and a dark blue skirt, hugging a large, light blue heart. The heart has a dark blue outline and a small grey ring at the top. Three red hearts are floating in the background.

[illegible]



# MIND

Taking care of your mind is about managing your thoughts, worries and tackling the practical stuff that comes with being laid off. Taking care of your mind also means ensuring you stimulate your brain. Cultivating a healthy mind can support you in feeling more grounded and connected.

**Worries:** Later on, we'll do an exercise on airing out all your worries. When emotions run high we can sometimes act out of fear. Part of taking care of your head is also taking care of your thoughts and how they might be affecting the actions you take and the beliefs you have about yourself.

**Practical stuff:** This can look like assessing your finances 💰 or job hunting activities 🧑💻. Maybe what you need is clarity on your budget so that you know how much space you have to plan vs act. Or perhaps reimagining your whole career 🧠. Maybe starting a business or freelancing, exploring all the options and possibilities you might have. Maybe you spend time exploring opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

**Stimulating your mind:** Stimulating your mind is not only rewarding for your brain but it can also help to keep you thinking on your feet. I enjoy stimulating my brain by playing video games. It helps when I'm feeling a bit anxious and solving puzzles gives my brain a nice little reward 🎁. It also keeps my thinking fresh which helps in interviews when I need to respond to questions.



# MIND

- 🧠 How can you make space for yourself to think more clearly?
- 🧠 If there are no limits, what are you wishing next for your career?
- 🧠 What practical activities do you need to take care of?
- 🧠 What fun things can you do to stimulate your mind?

I will take care of my mind by:

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More writing space on the next page 📌

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# BODY



I know that when I'm under stress or pressure the first thing to go are my gym sessions. My **thoughts get distorted** and I worry that if I go exercise I'll be away from my computer and could miss an email from a potential opportunity. The reality is that's unlikely to happen and I always have my phone on me.

Now when I get stressed I think of **exercise as a way to process my thoughts**, to give myself time. Even if I don't feel like it I go anyway. I usually feel good after and often nothing major happened while I was at the gym. Here is a message I got from a friend when I convinced her to go to gym even though she was super tired and overly stressed.

I hate how right you were about me working out. The fact that I'm not in bed right now is shocking to me

22:06

It doesn't have to be gym. You can:

- 🚶 go for a walk
- 🧘 do free yoga on YouTube ([Yoga With Adriene](#) & [Jessica Richburg](#)), 🎶 put on some music and dance.
- 🌳 a run in a park or forest
- 🏔️ a hike





# BODY



I will take care of my body by:

 What ideas do you have for taking care of your body?

🏃 What does it look like in terms of frequency?

[illegible]

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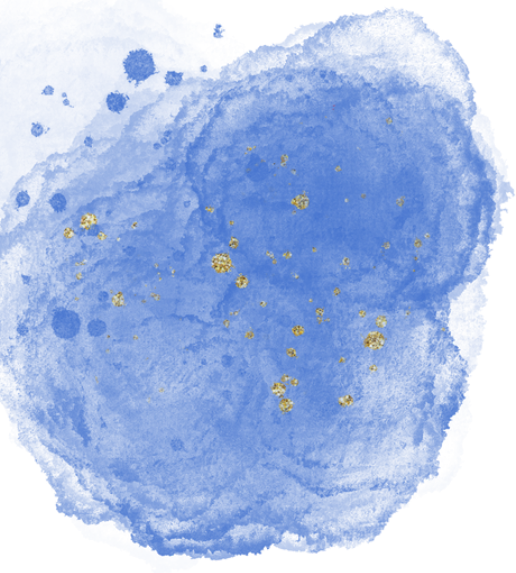


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# SOUL

Whether you're religious or not, to me this is really about what fills your cup.

**What gives you hope?**

**What brings you peace?**

It can be hard to find hope or peace when you've lost your job. It can be hard to trust that things will work out in the end but hope can keep us going.

🙏 Maybe it's going to your place of worship and seeking support

🧘 Maybe it's meditation or yoga by yourself or in a group

🚶 Maybe walking is a ritual that helps refresh your body & soul

✨ Maybe daily affirmations is something that works for you

🖍 Maybe it's colouring in or painting and taking time for yourself



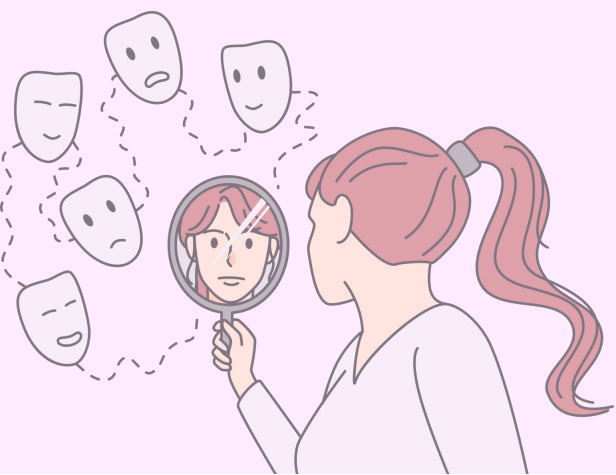


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Now that you've  
looked at your  
whole self, let's  
look at where you  
are now



# WHERE AM I NOW?

If this section feels too overwhelming at first, feel free to do it in stages. Or maybe return to it another day when you feel like you have more energy.

When I need to do something that feels overwhelming I like to play some instrumental music (my current favourite is the [Dark Academia playlist on Deezer](#)).

If you can write down your answers in addition to speaking it through with someone it can be beneficial. I find the process of writing can have a calming effect when I'm in a spiral.

## HOW ARE YOU REALLY DOING?

## WHICH FRIENDS OR FAMILY OR EVEN COLLEAGUES CAN YOU LEAN ON FOR SUPPORT?

# WHERE AM I NOW?

WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL THINGS YOU STILL NEED TO TAKE CARE OF?

IF YOU COULD JUMP INTO SOMETHING NEW WHAT WOULD THAT BE? WHAT FEELINGS COME UP WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS OR FREELANCING? IF YOU COULD DO IT, WHAT WOULD THAT LOOK LIKE?



# FINAL REFLECTION

Journal whatever thoughts come to mind for you now. It doesn't have to be perfect and no one will ever need to see it.

## What do you need to say to yourself?

## What options can you see now?

[illegible]

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# WHAT'S NEXT?

I hope that this workbook is useful. I made this **completely free** to support others who have experienced challenging times.

However, if you enjoyed this guide you can contribute to this passion project via Buy Me a Coffee ☕ at

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/jayallenmorris>



Feel free to forward this to anyone you think may need it

## What's next:

Two more workbooks will be released soon: Resume & Career Support and Dealing with Finances

If you are interested in Group Coaching on the topic of being laid off, register your interest [here](#):

## GET IN TOUCH WITH ME

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